Gardening with **seed balls**

Step 1: scatter onto bare soil or compost

No need to dig! As the wildflower seeds are encased in clay and peat-free compost, they are essentially already "planted". Simply scatter onto bare soil or compost (avoid scattering on grass) on a garden bed or in a pot, leaving at least 10cm between each ball. The outer clay helps to prevent birds and insects from eating the seeds, keeping the seeds nicely protected and ensuring your bee and butterfly friendly wildflower garden has every chance of growing success.

Step 2: seeds germinate inside the ball and begin to sprout

With regular watering and enough sun and warmth, the wildflower seeds inside the ball will start to germinate and little sprouts will begin to appear from the ball. This process can take 4-6 weeks from scattering depending on the frequency of rainfall. It can be speeded up by watering the seed balls once or twice on dry days. We add chilli powder to our Seedball recipe to help deter slugs and snails from eating the young shoots.

Step 3: ball breaks down as plants become established

Slowly the ball will disperse and become less visible, leaving a patch of young plants which will continue to grow into a beautiful wildflower garden.

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A SIMPLER WAY TO GROW FROM SEED

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Step 4: plants flower and become hub of wildlife activity!

Each type of wildflower takes a different length of time to come into flower – some will flower in the first year and others will flower in the following year. Once in flower they will provide important habitat and food for an abundance of garden wildlife.

What to expect from growing wildflowers

Wildflowers are notoriously tricky to grow which is why we try to give them as much help as possible!

1. In a natural setting wildflower seeds can stay viable for many years and only burst into life when the conditions for that particular seed are just right. Not all seeds scattered at any one time will grow in the first year.

2. Many seeds need to experience a cold spell to trigger their germination once the temperature warms up. If scattering seed balls in late spring/ summer we'd suggest storing the balls in a fridge for a couple of weeks prior to scattering.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions, we're happy to chat! **hello@seedball.co.uk**

3. The flowers to expect in your first year will be annuals, these need to get all of their work done in one growing season and so produce attractive blooms to entice pollinators quickly. Once pollinated these annuals set seed and their life cycle is complete.

4. In the second year you'll see perennials and biennials flowering, which naturally are slower to grow, but once established they'll happily come back year after year.

5. Wildflower seeds can be fussy about soil type and tend not to do well on soils or composts enriched with fertiliser (or where the ground is too dry/compact). We suggest scattering your seed balls in a few different locations in case there are some which are not optimal for wildflowers.

top tips

- Seed balls are thirsty! They require regular rainfall for the seeds to start to grow. If there's not much rain about and you'd like to help the balls along, water them every day, fully drenching the balls.
- Keep the area around the base of your wildflowers free of other plants and grass.
- The balls shouldn't simply disappear overnight unless heavy rain has submerged them under the soil. Keep an eye out for squirrels who can sometimes have fun running off with the balls.
- Growth in the first few months can be naturally slow and patience is required. Once established, wildflowers are a rewarding and beautiful addition to any garden, window box and balcony.
- Young wildflower growth can look very much like weeds! Use our online ID tool to help identify your young wildflowers.

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